

May, 2010



AMHERST MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Elementary Newsletter

Looking Back

It's hard to believe that our school year is so soon coming to an end. So much has happened and yet there is always so much more to do. Our friends have conquered so many challenges and learned so much in such a short time. Our experiences both inside and outside the classroom have allowed us to demonstrate how much we know and have shown us how much knowledge the universe has yet to share.

We have been blessed with teachers who specialize in Music, Spanish, Art and Theater within the classroom and have met with teachers who specialize in books, organic farming, sign language, early American life, zoology, astronomy and wildlife outside the classroom by way of our various field trips.

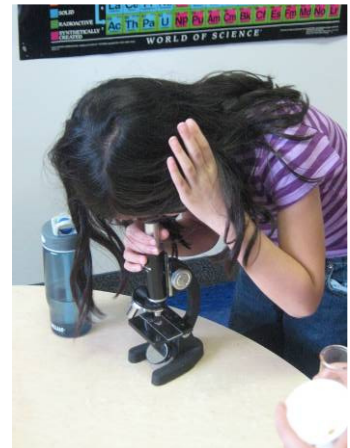
The children continue to learn about how to be active participants in what they learn, how to act as an assistant to a friend in need and are honing their own teaching skills as they move through their daily activities. I have observed the growth in these seven children over this last year and it never ceases to amaze me how much we all change in such

a short measure of time. We've had many milk teeth lost, and inches grown. Through the year our friends have gained social graces and understanding and developed tools to navigate tricky situations, conflicts, challenges and successes. They have learned to ask questions instead of assume, and the importance of listening instead of speaking, and to embrace their emotions while finding ways to express themselves constructively. In short we have all matured another year, have become more prepared to face the world and all of its wonders and challenges.

Montessori has always been touted to provide an extremely excellent academic curriculum. We offer accelerated maths, in depth scientific exploration, engaging and interesting language arts. And indeed the children reveled in each of these areas at different points of this year. More importantly, they each found deep satisfaction in their accomplishments in each of these areas during their journey. They worked hard, they helped create reasonable deadlines for themselves, they paced themselves, they learned to prioritize. They each took steps towards becoming independent, confident, responsible individuals. Each child continues to work as a part of our community to ensure

the success of their classmates.

It is truly a wonder to be witness to this evolution. When I am asked why I chose to be a teacher I generally say it's because I love helping children. But, with every year added to my teaching history I believe the reason may be much more selfish than this. I love to be a part of this miraculous unfolding of the greatness of these young beings. I am rejuvenated by their energy, their enthusiasm, and their unconditional love. If I can help to tend to this spectacular nature so that it continues to thrive in their spirits well into their adult lives, it gives me hope that we will find peace in this world. These children will help usher it in.



Making Paper

The whirl of the blender, splashing water, squishing sponges, scissors slicing and excited chatter were all part of the din in our classroom for the past few Fridays as we continued our work with textiles and learned how to make paper with Nicole. After using the frame and deckle to sift pulp from the water we cooched and cooched with sponges to dry the pulp enough to separate the deli-

cate paper away from the screen. The children marveled at the beauty and variety of paper we made from delicate veils to something akin to cardboard! The final product? A lovely booklet of hand made paper sewn together with pride and care.



We all watch intently as Nicole demonstrates how we will make paper pulp with the blender.



Oh, the Beauty of Spring

We could not have asked for a more glorious day than what we received for our trip to Groff Park. The sun was warm on our skin, the breeze was cool; it was a beautiful spring day! After slathering on the sunscreen, making sure that everyone had lunches, and water bottles in tote, we began our 45 minute walk to Groff Park. The children did a fantastic job of minding the rules of the

road, were extremely courteous to the police directing traffic around some construction, and did not complain even once about the walk being at all arduous.... At least not on the way there! We arrived at the park with plenty of time to have a snack and some play in the playground — I must remember that I am no longer in my youth, and am not made for wild seesaw rides!

After lunch we set off on our highly anticipated hike through the trails of the park. We were incredibly fortunate in all of the wonders of nature we witnessed. An oriole, a kingfisher, a crayfish, freshwater clams and a flying turkey were just a few of the creatures

that graced us with their presence. We examined the many types of ferns and flowers and discovered that each of us loves butter according to the buttercups we gathered.

We were exhausted upon our return, but I am sure we all look forward to our next trip out to Groff Park!



Thank You

Many thanks to Lisa Moe for sharing a wonderful collection of books about social graces and community behaviors. The children so loved the silliness of "Tattle Tongue" and "How to Lose Your Friends," but they also understood the impact that helping friends can have on our community.



Thank You

Thank you to Lynn Yanis and John Maher for the donation of a supremely comfortable couch! Though it now graces our great room, I am working my best to help it find its way into our classroom for the fall!

Thank You

Mille Grazie to Josh and Airlie Rose who have brought us a much desired heating lamp and warming pad so that we may have a reptilian addition to our class!

Thank You

Merci to Leslie Saulsberry for being so gracious as to drive some of our friends to the farm! Our community greatly appreciates your time and your vehicle!

"To care for, and keep awake, the guide within every child is therefore a matter of first importance"

Dr. Maria Montessori

Upcoming Events

June 1st—Trip to Look Park

June 9th—End of Year Celebration!

June 14—August 6—Summer Session